IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-11 cancelled.

12. (Currently amended) A process for distillatively purifying crude water-containing dimethylacetamide (crude DMAc) comprising DMAc, low boilers and high boilers [[by]] removing the low boilers and the high boilers to obtain ~~pure~~ DMAc which is purer than crude DMAc, in one of the column configurations listed hereinbelow:

(I) a main column (MC) with sidestream column (SC) or

(II) a dividing wall column (DWC),

which comprises operating at least the main column (MC) in column configuration (I) and the dividing wall column (DWC) in column configuration (II) at a top pressure in ~~the~~ a range from 0.5 to 1.8 bar absolute.

13. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[1]] 12, including operating at least the main column (MC) in column configuration (I) and the dividing wall column (DWC) in column configuration (II) ~~are operated~~ at a top pressure in ~~the~~ a range from 0.8 to 1.5 bar absolute.

14. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[1]] 12, wherein the sidestream column (SC) in column configuration (I) is operated at a top pressure in the range from 0.5 to 1.8 bar absolute.

15. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[1]] 12, wherein separating internals having ~~long~~ delay times, ~~preferably~~ installing trays~~, are installed~~ in the stripping section of the main column (MC) in column configuration (I) or in ~~the~~ a stripping section of the dividing wall column (DWC) in column configuration (II).

16. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[1]] 12, wherein providing from 5 to 30[[,]] theoretical plates ~~are provided~~ in ~~the~~ a stripping section of the main column (MC) or of the dividing column (DWC).

17. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[1]] 12, wherein equipping the main column (MC) or the dividing wall column (DWC) ~~are~~ each ~~equipped~~ with a bottom evaporator and a condenser at the top of the column.

18. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[1]] 12, wherein setting the temperature at the top of the main column (MC) or of the dividing wall column (DWC) ~~is set~~ within ~~the~~ a range from 70 to 130°C and setting the temperatures in the bottom of the main column (MC) and of the dividing wall column (DWC) ~~are~~ each ~~set~~ within ~~the~~ a range from 150 to 200°C.

19. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[1]] 12, wherein carrying out the distillative purification of crude DMAc ~~is carried out~~ in a column configuration (I) whose main column (MC) has a gaseous sidestream take off and whose sidestream column (SC) is operated in rectifying mode.

20. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[8]] 19, wherein having the main column (MC) ~~has~~ with a smaller diameter above the gaseous sidestream takeoff compared to the region of the main column (MC) below the gaseous sidestream takeoff.

21. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[1]] 12, wherein carrying out the distillative purification ~~is carried out~~ in a column configuration (I) in which the main column (MC) has a liquid sidestream and the sidestream column (SC) ~~isoperated~~ is operated in stripping mode.

22. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[1]] 12, which is operated continuously.

23. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[2]] 13, wherein operating at least the main column (MC) in column configuration (I) and the dividing wall column (DWC) in column configuration (II) ~~are operated~~ at a top pressure in ~~the~~ a range from at 1.0 to 1.3 bar absolute.

24. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[3]] 14, wherein operating the sidestream column (SC) in column configuration (I) ~~is operated~~ at a top pressure in ~~the~~ a range from 0.8 to 1.5 bar absolute.

25. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 13, wherein operating the sidestream column (SC) in column configuration (I) ~~is operated~~ at a top pressure in ~~the~~ a range from 1.0 to 1.3 bar absolute.

26. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[5]] 15, wherein providing from 10 to 25 theoretical plates ~~are provided~~ in the stripping section of the main column (MC) or of the dividing wall column (DWC).

27. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 15, wherein providing from 12 to 18 theoretical plates ~~are provided~~ in the stripping section of the main column (MC) or of the dividing wall column (DWC).

28. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim [[7]] 17, wherein setting the temperatures at the top of the main column (MC) or of the dividing wall column (DWC) ~~are set~~ within ~~the~~ a range from 85 to 115°C and setting the temperatures in the bottom of the main column (MC) and of the dividing wall column (DWC) ~~are~~ each ~~set~~ within ~~the~~ a range from 160 to 190°C.

29. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 17, wherein setting the temperature at the top of the main column (MC) or of the dividing wall column (DWC) ~~is set~~ within ~~the~~ a range from 95 to 105°C and setting the temperatures in the bottom of the main column (MC) and the dividing wall column (DWC) ~~are~~ each ~~set~~ within ~~the~~ a range of 170 to 180°C.